

DEDICATED TO OUR COMMUNITY, OUR PROFESSION AND EACH OTHER

THE RESPONDER

August



Equity-Diversity Conference Comes to Alexandria



2009 Equity – Diversity

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The City of Alexandria Fire Department will host the annual Equity-Diversity Conference at the George Washington Masonic Temple, October 15-16. The Equity-Diversity Conference, formally known as the Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) Symposium was developed by the Department of Fire Programs. They realized there was a serious need for a format that increased the awareness of cultural diversity, improved human relations and fostered equal employment opportunity and affirmative actions. They have hosted and co-hosted three EEO/AA Symposiums. As a result, in April 1991, the Virginia Fire Services Board, in conjunction with the Department of Fire Programs, created a standard council (EEO/AA). It is comprised of Fire Service EEO Specialists who are strongly committed and very dedicated.

The Council was eradicated in 1999 and the symposiums discontinued. In 2002, Fire Chief Dennis Rubin and Captain Peppi Dayton, of Norfolk Fire and Rescue Department, recognized the need for structured equity and diversity education/ training programs. The symposiums were resurrected to fill that need, and renamed to Equity-Diversity.

The hosting agency creates a theme. This year's theme is "Going the Distance Beyond Expectations". The logo depicts six figures working together in the dark to achieve a common goal of awareness. The light or sun is awareness. They use the foundation of Integrity, Respect, and Equity to reach the goal.

The symposiums have attracted participants nationally and internationally. Well known and respected speakers in the field cover a myriad of topics. This year's keynote speaker is Dr. Christopher J. Metzler, PhD, Associate

Dean of Human Resource for the Masters of Professional Studies at Georgetown University. There will be a Panel Discussion as part of the Conference. The panel discussion will bring together, for the first time, members of the Virginia State Fire Chiefs Association, International Association of Black Professional Firefighters (IABPFF), Women in the Fire Service (WFS), National Association of Hispanic Firefighters (NAHF), and International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC). Chief Thiel will moderate the panel discussion. The panel will be asked three questions relating to Equity and Diversity within the Fire Service. This year's conference promises to be unique and informative. If you wish to attend or have any questions about the conference, contact Monique Assante-Jackson at the Professional Development Center.

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This newsletter written and compiled by:
Captain Luis Santano
PIO / Community Services Officer

Thursday, October 15, 2009

Session I

Workshop I: Beyond Age, Race and Gender

Workshop II: CPAT Update

Session II

Workshop I: One Fire Department, One Team...Be a Leader

Workshop II: Challenging Homophobia & Heterosexism in the Fire Service

Friday, October 16, 2009

Session III

Workshop I: Micro-triggers

Workshop II: Recruiting and Retaining Diversity in the Fire Service

Session IV

Workshop I: ADA

Workshop II: Ethical Decision Making

Panel Discussion - Title VII

Sleep for Your Health.... Submitted by Captain Ross

Sleep is so very important for your health. Are you getting enough sleep every night? Do you think that you are able to function adequately on five or six hours of sleep a night? If you answered “yes”, you are deluding yourself according to a number of studies. I am sorry to say that lack of sleep can cause more than just droopy eyelids; there are physical consequences for lack of sleep. Lack of sleep increase's the likelihood of obesity and diabetes, and recently researchers have linked less sleep in midlife with high (and worsening) blood pressure. Regularly depriving yourself of sleep affects your mind, too; learning, memory and performance are all related to getting enough sleep.

In the Archives of Internal Medicine, Kristen L. Knutson, Ph.D., of the University of Chicago along with other colleagues recently reported on a six year study that was conducted involving 578 adults whose blood pressure, sleep duration, and other health variables were measured. Overall the majority of participants slept an average of six hours a night; only seven subjects averaged eight or more hours of sleep. Those researchers concluded that the participants who slept fewer hours were significantly more likely to have higher blood pressure. Their study predicted that sleeping less would in-



crease one's blood pressure over five years, along with the onset of hypertension. Each hour of reduction in sleep duration was associated with a 37 percent increase in the odds of developing high blood pressure.

Their study also provided evidence for a link between the duration and quality of sleep and high blood pressure levels using objectively measured sleep characteristics. They went on to conclude that intervention studies should be conducted to determine whether optimizing sleep duration and quality can reduce the risk of increased blood pressure. Almost one-third of Americans have hypertension or high blood pressure, a condition that contributes to 7 million deaths worldwide each year. It would be fascinating to determine if getting more sleep at night would aide in the reduction of these conditions.

There are ways to help you get a

healthy night's sleep. Part of your evening routine should include preparing for sleep. Spend some time doing things that relax you like reading a book or listening to soothing music. Take a warm bath before bed will help you sleep more soundly, and plan on going to bed at or around the same time every night.

Better sleep is attributed to cooler temperatures in your bedroom along with a comfortable, quiet, and dark room. Avoid bright lights from such things as clocks, outside sources, or electronic devices and you should see an improvement in your sleeping environment. Use your bedroom for sleep, not for watching TV or playing on the computer, because all those lights disturb the normal rhythm of the hormones preparing your body for sleep. Additional advice for a good, healthy night's sleep is to skip the caffeine. Avoid drinking caffeinated drinks at least five hours before bedtime. Scientists say that a warm glass of milk or a cup of decaffeinated tea before going to bed helps set your body up for sleep.

It all boils down to what works for you. Try different options to improve your sleeping environment, practice tips for a healthier night's sleep, try to achieve seven or eight hours of sleep each night, and then maintain those good sleep habits. Researchers have said that, “good sleep habits that translate into getting a good night's sleep may pay off with a lower mortality risk.”

Additional tips for a good night sleep:

Eat a small snack several hours before bedtime. Hunger pangs can wake you up, so don't go to sleep hungry. Choose a small, healthy snack, such as a small bowl of oatmeal or cereal with low-fat milk, or yogurt with granola sprinkled on top.

Avoid large, high-fat meals before bed. A light snack is fine, but eating too much late in the evening can interfere with sleep.

Avoid heavy, spicy foods, especially if you're prone to heartburn. Eating too much may cause you to feel physically uncomfortable when lying down.

Don't drink too much liquid. Drinking lots of fluids before bed can cause you to wake up repeatedly to use the bathroom.

Avoid alcohol. Although it may initially make you feel sleepy, alcohol prevents deeper stages of sleep and often causes you to awaken in the middle of the night.

Fill The Boot is Back...submitted by Matt Strauss

The members of the Alexandria Firefighters Local 2141 are excited to announce the Fill the Boot fundraiser to benefit the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) has returned to the City of Alexandria. Local 2141 is proudly working in cooperation with the Alexandria Medics Association and the Black Fire Service Professionals of Alexandria.

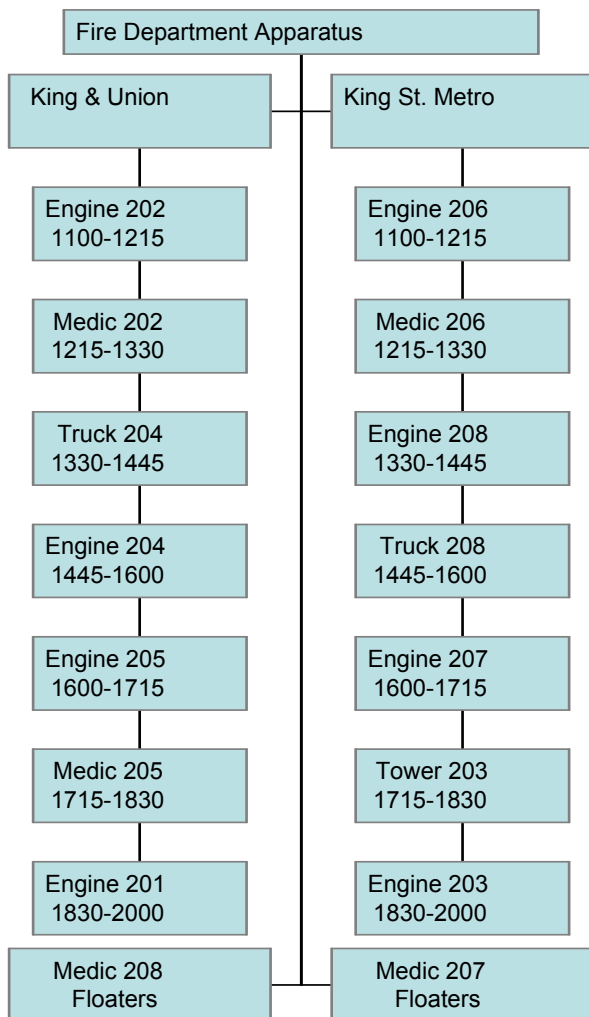
Across the country firefighters have been raising funds for MDA for over 50 years. Each year, just before Labor Day firefighters, paramedics and other fire department work together to support a great cause.

On September 4, 2009, Alexandria Fire Department personnel will be collecting donations at multiple locations throughout the city. On duty firefighters and medics will rotate through the locations in two hour shifts between 11am and 7pm. During this time each unit will still be available for emergency calls as this is still the top priority.

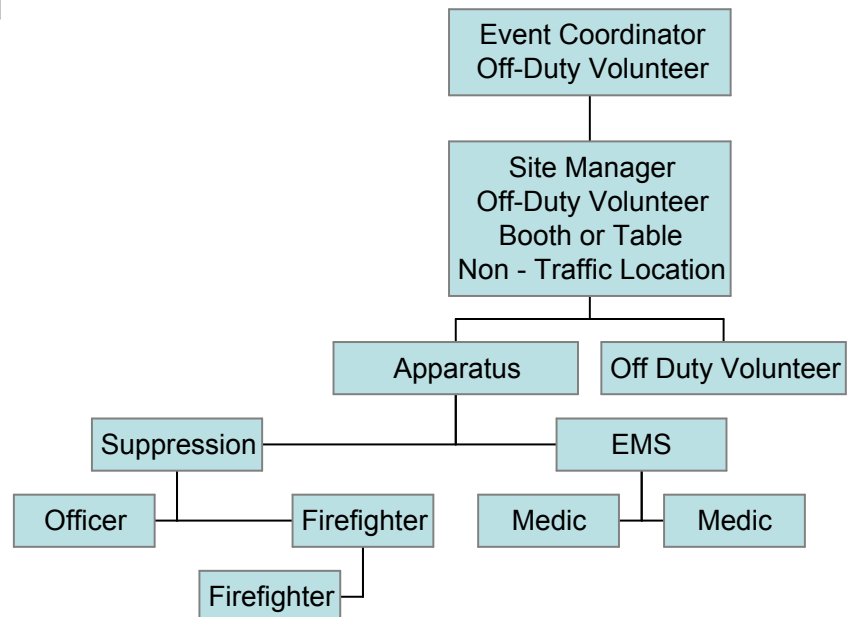


This year will be supported by the department and will involve on-duty staff but will only be successful with volunteer support. This will be the first time all three labor groups join together for this very worthy cause. If you're interested in donating a few hours of your time on September 4th please contact Matt Strauss via city email.

Site locations and events



Site Staffing



Engineered Wood Joist... Excerpts from NFPA Journal

It's here!. Early in the afternoon of August 13, 2006, the fire department in Green Bay, Wisconsin, responded to a suspected residential basement fire. An engine company focused on the flames while a ladder company worked on ventilation. The department also had a report that someone was in the building and prepared to make an entry.

Firefighters arrived on the scene four minutes after the fire was reported. Approximately seven minutes later, two firefighters began a search of the home's first floor. They crawled in and sounded the floor to ensure it could support them. The floor, made of concrete for a radiant heating system, seemed solid. Satisfied it would hold, the firefighters inched their way into the structure on their hands and knees as the fire roared beneath them in the basement.

Within moments, they heard a loud



*After a test, center almost completely burned away by fire

cracking sound. The floor gave way, plunging them into the fiery basement. Despite a fractured hip and ribs and first-degree burns to the back and upper arms, one firefighter managed to escape by crawling through a basement window. The other firefighter fell into another part of the basement, separated by a partial wall and blocked by floor debris. The 17-year veteran of the department, perished in the fire, and his body was recovered the next day. Medical examiners determined that he had died of smoke inhalation and burns.

An after-report of the incident by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health found that the concrete first floor had concealed the severity of the fire in the basement. The

report highlighted the extreme speed with which lightweight wood I-joists, such as those used in the house that burned, can reach their failure point when exposed to fire.

The findings have become all too familiar for firefighters. In January 2007, Hamilton County, Tennessee, lost a "firefighter of the year" in another sudden structural collapse blamed on lightweight construction that failed in a fire. In April of that year, The failure of

lightweight construction in a fire contributed to the death of a firefighter Kyle Wilson in Prince William County.

According to NFPA Fire Analysis and Research Department statistics, 250 firefighters died of injuries suffered at structure fires from 1997 to 2006. Of those, 44 were killed

inside buildings as a result of structural collapses, and another nine were outside and struck when walls collapsed. Of the 44 killed inside, 24 were killed in roof collapses in 14 fires, 17 in floor collapses in 13 fires, two in a wall collapse in a fire, and one in a ceiling collapse

The problem isn't lightweight construction. The problem is what happens when lightweight construction is exposed to fire.

Tests conducted by UL documented striking differences between traditional and engineered systems.

For example, a traditionally constructed floor system, without a dry-wall ceiling to protect its underside, withstood the test fire for 18 minutes. By comparison, a similar system using engineered wooden I-beams survived for about six minutes. The times to reach structural failure for the wood I-joist, steel C-joist, metal plate, and metal web wood truss assemblies were 35 to 60 percent shorter than that for the traditional solid wood joist assembly," the study reported. In every instance, the floors failed, "characterized by a sharp increase in floor deflection and usually accompanied by heavy flame penetration through the test assemblies, as well as by a sharp increase in compartment temperature above the test floor assemblies."

To make matters worse, according to



* A mannequin crashes through the floor as the supporting joist fail.

cracking sound. The floor gave way, plunging them into the fiery basement. Despite a fractured hip and ribs and first-degree burns to the back and upper arms, one firefighter managed to escape by crawling through a basement window. The other firefighter fell into another part of the basement, separated by a partial wall and blocked by floor debris. The 17-year veteran of the department



1210 N. Pelgram Street, Alexandria VA

Engineered Wood Joist ...continued

(Continued from page 4)

The Engineered Wood Association (APA), engineered I-joists comprised 4 to 6 percent of the market in the 1980s. By 2002, surveys showed that I-joists had achieved 44 percent of single-family floors. APA estimates that 58 percent of I-joists are used in new residential floors, 24 percent are used in nonresidential building construction, and 18 percent are used in repair and remodeling projects.

Surveys conducted by the National Association of Home Builders Research Center indicate that, not counting concrete floors, I-joists were used to build 48 percent of the single-family floor area and 40 percent of the multi-family "raised" floor area in 2007. The remaining floors were built with lumber joists, lumber trusses, or steel joists.

UL has developed an on-line course on engineered wood lumber that offers fire departments better understanding

of the challenges posed by lightweight construction.

The interactive program offers an overview of some of the lightweight construction techniques, the advantages of such materials, and the potential risks associated with these materials during fires. For more information on this program go to <http://content.learnshare.com/courses/73/187716/player.html>

* Photos; Underwriters Laboratories

Spot Light



Pictured L-R Top: Andre Dent (brother), Anela Dent (niece), Tiffany Dent (wife), Myron, Lamont (son),

L-R Bottom: Heaven (daughter) Rosemary Green (mother), Xavier (son) Ariana (daughter)

To some, I am only firefighter Dent. However, there is much more to this book's cover. The pages are vast with information: displaying various facets that encompass my family, work, and leisure activities. Thirty-two years ago, this coming September 11th, I was born

in Washington DC, later raised in the state of Maryland. Through the years, I stayed closely knitted with my family. My family encouraged my interest in athletics. I excelled in football and track in high school and later intercollegiate competition. Closing out my Bowie High school athletics as Honorable mention, I broadened my scale to compete a Salisbury University formally known as, Salisbury State University. I was a student-athlete and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and received Co-Player of the Year Award at Running back. I was ranked nationally in Division III college sports.

A year after graduating, my hopes of playing professional football were dashed due to a broken right fibula. I, reluctantly, entered the workforce and after a few jobs found my niche and home in the Alexandria Fire Department. Its warm reception and

strong foundation gave me confidence to provide for a family of my own. I married Tiffany Dent, and welcomed my four children to this world: Ariana Z. (4yrs), Heaven (3yrs), Lamont (2yrs) (named after my late brother Officer Dent), and Xavier Dent (6wks). When I am not at work, I spend ample time with my wife and children. I also, have become a licensed and certified personal trainer. I love to write. I have started three books, which I will have published: a personal reflection of detailed experience book, a fictional book, and a poetry compilation book. Rarely, do I go to open mic night, but I do go. These are just a few peeps at me in ink. Lastly, I am working on two business ventures. One is a family oriented fun and leisure activities establishment. The other is (P.E.E.P. Ink) Powerful Epiphany's Electrifying Poets Ink. Surely, this is only a moment of spotlight which will shortly become dim and nonexistent, but that doesn't mean that I am no longer there! So continue to look for me in the future! Be safe and thanks for letting me share my world.

STATISTICS

FIRE ALARM HEADQUARTERS CALLS PROCESSED	
911	1237
Administration Received	5456
Administration Dialed	2385
Dispatched Calls	
Total calls	9201

July Run Stats

	Unit	EMS	SUP	TOTAL	Current Yr	Previous Yr
Station 201	E201	43	73	116	834	1,422
Total		43	73	116	834	1,422
Station 202	E202	46	85	131	840	1,357
	M202	149	43	192	1,306	2,205
Total		195	128	323	2,146	3,562
Station 203	E203	52	63	115	739	1,265
	T203	13	79	92	592	954
Total		65	142	207	1,331	2,219
Station 204	E204	50	64	114	763	1,319
	T204	10	113	123	851	1,389
Total		60	177	237	1,614	2,708
Station 205	E205	63	115	178	1,268	2,127
	M205	224	48	272	1,808	2,857
Total		287	163	450	3,076	4,984
Station 206	E206	73	99	172	1,252	1,974
	M206	185	49	234	1,697	2,806
	R206	0	0	0	234	535
Total		258	148	406	3,183	5,315
Station 207	E207	92	88	180	1,286	2,230
	M207	185	38	223	1,490	2,469
Total		277	126	403	2,776	4,699
Station 208	E208	111	113	224	1,700	2,828
	M208	200	62	262	1,744	2,877
	T208	17	97	114	818	1,366
Total		328	272	600	4,262	7,071
Station totals		1,513	1,229	2,742	19,222	31,980

HOT SHOTS



On the cliffs at Great Falls



Swiftwater boat training at Great Falls



Decon training at Potomac



DC Fire Boat 1



John Vollmer's retirement



Van fire on flat bed tow truck— Eisenhower Ave



Engine 201 at Ladrey during National Night Out



Columbia Wagon 4